

Minutes of the Tree & Forest Committee Meeting
Monday August 15, 2016 4:00PM Town Library

Attending: Paula Byrdy, Kacy Westwood, Jim Neureuther, Karl Mick

Absent: Nick DeCandia

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.
2. The minutes of the June 6 meeting were approved with the correction of spelling Jim's surname.
3. As Treasurer, Jim reported:
 - a. General Account (Town approved FY17 budget): \$750
 - b. Revolving Account \$5,675.79 (reflects \$250 donation of Robert Fraker and brother for memorial tree at Laston)
 - c. Elhannon has not yet invoiced Serviceberry tree planted in May. Jim has sent two email reminders. Expected invoice to be ~\$142
4. Fundraising Plans – Texas Holdem will be held Saturday evening or Sunday afternoon, Nov 12/13. Jim contacted Berkshire Poker. Michele is moving to Colorado, and Barry will coordinate. He will check with Stephentown to find if they have their poker that weekend. If so, we will do Sunday afternoon since Stephentown will take all serious players on Saturday night. As soon as possible the date will be set and Jim Midas at Skyline will be notified. He has a placeholder for both times.
5. Tree Status/King Elmer Inoculation.
 - a. UMASS Diagnostic Lab Visit. Dr. Nicholas Brazee (PhD, Woody Plant Pathologist for UMASS diagnostic Laboratory) is doing grant research on elms that have been regularly injected to measure amount of decay. He uses a Sonic Tomograph to make sonogram type measurements and an Electric Resistance Tomograph to make resistance measurements. Bob Presutti from Pittsfield's Herberg Arboretum contacted Jim N about the plans to make measurements on King Elmer. The planned day and time were changed several times but finally occurred later on Wed Aug 3. Nancy Tunnecliff called Jim when they arrived several hrs. behind most recent plan. Dr. Brazee was accompanied by Bob Presutti and Ron Yapple (Race Mt Tree Services who inoculate King Elmer). Chris Wheeler a former Race Mt employee was also present. Chris has expressed an interest in joining Tree Committee. Dr. Brazee will send a report to Ron Yapple on results of the King Elmer measurements. What was seen on the computer display indicated significant decay in the lower trunk. Two measurements were made (about 4 ft. and 2.5 ft. above ground). Each measurement documents a horizontal slice. The measurements were taken using 12 small nails driven into the outer bark. Sonic data was obtained by tapping each nail with a special hammer. Resistance data was taken by connecting wires to each nail. Dr. Nick indicated the decay was significant and likely due to age and not caused by DED. He would like to come back and make another measurement lower to the ground. At this time his equipment does not support the number of data points needed since the circumference closer to the base of the tree will need more than 12 data points. Takeaway at this point is that a program to monitor this decay periodically over the future needs to be considered to better understand how fast the decay changes and whether there is risk of tree collapse in future years/decades.
 - b. Ron Yapple (Race Mt) told Jim that inoculation of King Elmer would occur sometime in Aug. Jim had already removed sod from base of the tree per request from Ron. On Aug 3, Ron indicated

that removal of more sod would be helpful to allow more main roots exposed for injection points. Jim removed more sod and dirt on Tue Aug 9. An email was sent to Ron Yapple asking for info about when the injection is planned. No response yet.

- c. Laston Park Trees. All trees planted in 2015 and the Serviceberry planted this spring are doing well. Once exception is the Catalpa which did not survive winter but has sprouted vigorously from the root. The best sprout will be kept and trained as the new tree replacement. Moisture levels at Laston have been good. The Serviceberry was watered regularly during June/July by Jim when dryer conditions existed. Remaining trees have not required manual watering. Jim talked to Bill Decelles about mowing around trees without damaging them. Mowing has been great since discussing the matter with Bill.

6. Tree Signage for Laston, Arboretum, Memorial Park

- a. Jim contacted Graphics Impact Sign (John Renzi owner) about details of how to provide specific info to them for the tree identification signs we plan to purchase. John will get back to Jim. At this point we will obtain following 34 signs.
 - i. Laston Park: 14 newly planted trees 2015/2016.
 - ii. Laston Park: 6 previously planted trees
 - iii. Memorial Park: 5 previously planted trees
 - iv. School Arboretum: 8 previously planted trees
 - v. Town Hall: 1 Veterans Tree (Princeton Elm)
- b. Arboretum Signs. Should we also obtain signs to identify the Arboretum area at Lanesborough Elementary and at beginning of Laston Walking trail? Thought is to have larger signage like the 250th Anniversary Josh Billing sayings around town. Kacy suggested we have something a little smaller. Signs could note that these arboretums are established and maintained by Tree and Forest Committee. Maybe include a tree related quote/poem excerpt. Paula will seek grant money to subsidize the cost.
- c. Tree City Signs. We have 2 new ones to be placed Brodie Mt Rd and the other in Berkshire Village. Jim contacted Bill Decelles and he will have DPW crew install signs where we want them.
- d. Kacy asked about the forest trail potential off of Ore Bed Road. Jim said Bill Girard is reviewing that area (about 100 acres). Jim will stay in touch.

7. Other Business

- a. Update Volunteer time
- b. Update Expense Items
- c. Compliance Training: Nick still has not done it.
- d. New Trees. It was voted to obtain two more trees to place along the Laston Park entrance if any are on year end sale at Whitney's. Last year we got 2 for 1 Sugar tyme flowering crab trees.
- e. Potential New Members
 - i. We are still hoping that Chris Wheeler will join the committee. He used to work for Race Mt., which takes care of King Elmer.
 - ii. Karl Mick. UMASS grad. Bailey Rd, Lanesborough has joined the Committee

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 4 p.m. in the Library